

Creative Evangelism

Inspire your congregation to focus on individual evangelism opportunities in creative ways.

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To prepare for an outreach event in the life of the church, why not promote a Creative Evangelism Month within your small group? Designate any month preceding a special event such as Easter, Christmas, Vacation Bible School or other function designed to bring new people into the church.

Creative evangelism is simply ordinary evangelism with a twist—a new method or even an old method that an individual has never tried. Creativity comes from gearing the method to the individual like Jesus did. The approach may be subtle (the lawyer who learned about the Good Samaritan), it may arouse curiosity (Nicodemus), or it may carry a surprise element (accusers of the adulteress woman).

Introduce the program with several Scriptures such as: The Great Commission—Matthew 28:19-20; opportunity—Ephesians 5:16; culture—1 Corinthians 9:19-23; harvest time—John 4:35. The idea is to build enthusiasm for evangelism. Ask members to write out a name of someone they would like to win to the Lord.

Pray for evangelistic zeal.

Pray for opportunity.

Pray for creative ideas.

Pray for receptive hearts.

Discuss creative ways to present the Gospel. Share personal stories or examples from others. The following true experiences will help the creative juices begin to flow:

- It wasn't until she had placed the building supplies in the car that Sheila realized she had been undercharged. When the checkout clerk expressed surprise that she would return to point out the error, she said, "Well, I wouldn't feel very good in church tomorrow knowing I had been dishonest." The clerk suggested putting the extra money in the offering. "No, God doesn't want that kind of money," Sheila said.
- After hearing a tale of woe from a prison inmate, Marvin said, "I'm really sorry, Son. You've had tough breaks all your life, but I know how you can turn your life around." When the young man showed interest, Marvin said, "When I come next week, I'll tell you about it." With his curiosity kindled, the inmate said, "I'd like to hear about it now."

- Glancing at his watch, Marvin said, "I can't do it today, but I'll be back next week." If hunger for a better life could build for a week, the young man would be more receptive to the gospel.
- When a co-worker became agitated over malfunctioning equipment, Sharon gently guided her to a private corner in the office. In a sympathetic tone of voice, she said, "You seem to be having a bad day." After the co-worker vented her frustrations, Sharon asked, "May I pray for you?" The prayer that projected Sharon's concern and God's love calmed the woman and showed her the value of a Christian lifestyle.
- In the beauty shop, Marie overheard the manicurist say to a client, "I asked my boyfriend what he would choose if he could have one wish. He said, 'I'd like to have proof that either there is a God or there isn't'." Marie made an appointment for her first manicure in years. After referring to the conversation she had overheard, Marie asked the woman if she would like a set of sermon tapes her pastor had recently preached on proof of the existence of God. The tapes were graciously received.
- When a thirty-six-year-old friend expressed his desire to get married and start a family, Larry directed him to church and Bible study groups. Through exposure to the Bible and a Christian example, the man gained interest in returning to the faith he had once walked away from. Romance will probably come later.

These examples are for inspiration only, not to be copied. Challenge each member to look for a way to share the gospel that will work in an individual situation. During each session of Creative Evangelism Month, allow group members to share success stories. Record each method and send the list to *Small Group Dynamics*. Your experiences may be just what others need to motivate them into action.